

STATEMENT OF WORK

COMESA SANITARY/PHYTOSANITARY TASK ORDER

PURPOSE:

The primary purpose of this task order is to identify fresh produce from COMESA member-states in East African and Indian Ocean Island countries which would be economically viable to export to the United States. Following the identification of specific fruits, vegetables and cut flowers for export, the contractor will work with importers, exporters, and government officials in the African target countries and the United States to support the pest risk assessment process required to export fresh produce to the United States. The contractor will work with the African exporters and government officials to ensure that products meet all APHIS requirements.

BACKGROUND:

The almost total lack of fresh produce exports from sub-Saharan Africa to the United States has been of great concern to both African and American government officials over the past year. This issue was highlighted by COMESA Secretary General Mwencha during a visit to Washington in September 2002 and by COMESA and other African officials at the recent AGOA Forum in Mauritius.

There are several factors which are impeding fresh produce exports to the United States from sub-Saharan Africa, including:

- a lengthy and complex series of steps to obtain import approvals from the Animal and Plant Health Inspectorate Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture;
- a lack of direct air cargo routes to the United States from sub-Saharan Africa or expensive transportation options via Europe;
- few easily identified African products that would be competitive in markets in the United States;
- a tradition of African producers working with European buyers and having few business relationships with American supermarkets or retail chains.

It is important to note that a substantial amount of fresh produce is currently being exported from East Africa and the Indian Ocean Islands to the European Union. For example, in the first ten months of 2002, \$314 million worth of horticultural crops were exported from Kenya making this country one of the top ten exporters of fresh vegetables and cut flowers in the world. Almost no Kenyan fresh produce exports were destined for the United States.

APPROACH:

In order to address the concerns raised during COMESA's recent visit to Washington and subsequent discussions regarding APHIS and fresh produce exports to the United States, a program combining workshops and technical assistance will be implemented by the contractor on behalf of USAID/REDSO and the COMESA Secretariat.

The target region of this program would be the East African and Indian Ocean Island COMESA member states with fresh produce export potential including Kenya, Uganda,

Rwanda, Ethiopia, Madagascar, and Mauritius. The southern tier COMESA countries – Namibia and Zambia in particular – are already the focus of attention by APHIS and are receiving technical assistance from the Southern Africa TRADE Hub.

Currently, most of the East African and Indian Ocean Island COMESA countries have not applied for APHIS approval for many products or begun the pest risk assessment process.

The contractor would have to work closely with the COMESA Secretariat based in Lusaka on all aspects of this activity. Although this activity is being contracted through USAID/REDSO, it will be co-managed by the COMESA Secretariat.

Phase one of this project would bring together the following parties to an initial workshop in early 2003:

- African fresh produce growers and exporters or association representatives
- African animal and plant health inspection service officials (i.e. KEPHIS from Kenya)
- USDA and APHIS officials (note that an APHIS official is scheduled to begin work in the Nairobi TRADE Hub by the third quarter of 2003)
- Fresh produce buyers from U.S. supermarket chains
- Air cargo company representatives
- Other interested officials.

This proposed workshop would seek to identify potential products from Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Madagascar, and Mauritius for possible export to the American market. The delegates would also discuss possible opportunities or obstacles in entering the American market such as supermarket quality requirements and airfreight constraints. The primary deliverable of this workshop would be a plan of action for completing the APHIS approval process for selected agricultural products from the region.

Phase two of this project would focus on:

- 1) establishing the necessary capacity to support APHIS approval for the identified products from the various countries;
- 2) linking producers/processors/exporters with potential US buyers;
- 3) designing follow-on technical assistance activities to move towards the actual export phase.

The details of the phase two implementation plan will be finalized after the initial workshop.

DUTIES/TASKS:

Working in close collaboration with the COMESA Secretariat and the USAID/REDSO Food Security Office, the contractor will:

- Review the results of SPS Workshops conducted in the region by the U.S Department of Agriculture over the past two years and research the current status of fruit and vegetable exports from sub-Saharan Africa in general and the six target countries in particular.
- Organize a stakeholder workshop in Nairobi to discuss issues related to fresh produce exports to the United States from East African and Indian Ocean Island countries. Issues related to organic production and marketing will be a sub-topic of this workshop. This workshop will also serve to plan the way forward for the project.
- Develop additional scopes of work for short-term consultants that may be required to implement this task order and begin the product identification and APHIS application

procedures in the six target countries.

- Complete a market assessment of potential American buyers or joint venture partners for the identified products or producers in the six target countries.

DELIVERABLES/REPORTING:

1. A strategy document for East African and Indian Ocean Island countries highlighting the recommended fresh produce to be exported and the processes to be taken to begin export to the United States.
2. End of task report on the progress made with the APHIS applications and the market identification for the selected fruits and vegetables from the East African and Indian Ocean Island countries.

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS:

The Contractor personnel should:

- Have experience in pest risk assessment policy work in the United States and developing countries, especially in Africa. This experience should include work at the policy and regulatory levels, as well as work with pest risk assessment procedures.
- Have contacts with African fresh produce exporters, American fresh produce importers and a comprehensive understanding of fresh produce marketing and sales in the United States.
- Have a proven ability to communicate and build confidence at the national level. The contractor should have demonstrated ability to successfully organize and facilitate stakeholder workshops.
- Have good interpersonal and writing skills.

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND ADMINISTRATION:

1. The contractor will be responsible for completing the duties and tasks as described in this SOW. To ensure conformity of deliverables with USAID and stakeholder concerns, the contractor will be required to ensure close collaboration with the COMESA Secretariat, national plant health inspection services, fresh produce exporters in East Africa and importers in the United States, and other key stakeholders.
2. USAID/REDSO Food Security Office in partnership with the COMESA Secretariat will have overall technical oversight responsibility for this task order including defining detailed reporting requirements. USAID/REDSO Food Security Office will designate officials to provide the technical oversight. USAID will also request COMESA to provide the Contractor with the necessary technical input as may be needed.
3. The contractor will be solely responsible ensuring the timeliness and quality of deliverables.

DURATION OF TASK ORDER:

USAID's estimated total Level of Effort for performance of work is five months of continuous work. However, subject to appropriate justification, a phased approach may be considered. A six-day workweek will be authorized. The following table outlines a desired illustrative schedule.

ESTIMATED LEVEL OF EFFORT:

General task order	Time allocation
Organize the Fresh Produce Export Stakeholders Workshop	1 month
Develop specific APHIS application strategies and United States market assessments for selected fruits and vegetables in target countries.	4 months
Total Level of Effort	5 months